

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Claims 1-22. (Canceled).

23. (Original) A depolarizer with more than two birefringent plates.

24. (Original) A depolarizer as in claim 23 where all the plates have substantially different thicknesses.

25. (Currently Amended) A depolarizer as in claim 23 wherein each of the birefringent plates has an ordinary axis, each birefringent plate having a ~~where all the plates have~~ substantially different rotation ~~angles~~ angle of their the respective ordinary axis.

26. (Original) A depolarizer as in claim 23 with three plates.

27. (Currently Amended) A depolarizer as in claim 26 where the thicknesses of the plates are ~~in some permutation of the ratios~~ the ratio of 1:3:9.

28. (Currently Amended) A depolarizer as in claim 26 where the thicknesses of the plates are ~~in some permutation of the ratios~~ the ratio of 3:4:9 4:3:9.

29. (Original) A depolarizer as in claim 26 where the angle between two of the plates is substantially $n\frac{\pi}{2} \pm \arccos(-1/3)/4$, where n is an integer.

30. (Original) A depolarizer as in claim 26 where the angle between two of the plates is substantially $\left(n + \frac{1}{2}\right)\frac{\pi}{2}$ where n is an integer.

31. (Currently Amended) A depolarizer with 3 plates, where the thicknesses of the plates are selected so that ~~the~~ a fundamental retardance frequency is not significantly detectable, and where ~~all the plates have~~ each plate has a substantially different rotation ~~angles~~ angle of ~~their~~ the respective ordinary axis.

Claim 32. (Canceled).

33. (New) A depolarizer as in claim 27 where the order of the three plates is selected such that at least one retardance frequency vanishes in a first quadrant.

34. (New) A depolarizer as in claim 28 where the order of the three plates is selected such that at least one retardance frequency vanishes in a first quadrant.

35. (New) A depolarizer as in claim 27 where the thicknesses of the three plates are selected such that the plate of intermediate thickness is positioned between the remaining two plates.

36. (New) A depolarizer as in claim 28 where the thicknesses of the three plates are selected such that the plate of least thickness is positioned between the remaining two plates.